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# Moral dilemmas (means): Librarians and information professionals facing new technologies

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## 1. What is moral dilemma?

**Moral dilemma** is a complex situation

that will often involve an apparent mental conflict between moral imperatives, in which to obey one would result in transgressing another.



## 2. Ethical versus law dilemma

**Legal issue** –

being threatened by legal sanctions that are anticipated in the operation of the justice system if we contrary to what is constituted by the letter of law.

**Ethical issue** –

being not threatened by any legal sanctions when act contrary to these standards. The possible are only a moral self-hangover or the disapproval of an environment.

*I new technologies cause new dilemmas*

*II moral dilemmas (should) touch everybody in information work*

*III rarity of examinations concerning the ethical awareness*



## 3. Methods used for the study

A questionnaire in the interview form among graduates/students of LIS studies:



*The librarians*

*The offices and banks employees*

*The news business/ information brokering professionals*

## 4. Results

### The LIBRARIANS' Moral Dilemmas

1. Being less proficient in computer use (helping less successfully)
2. Barriers to access to new technology among users (especially electronic materials)
3. The protection of personal data (user data, sharing information)
4. The protection of intellectual property (photocopying, the copyright protection of materials available online)
5. Facebook, Skype, instant messengers, blogs and other things



### An OFFICE/BANK EMPLOYEE'S Moral Dilemmas

1. Reliable information
2. The boundaries of fair use



### THE INFORMATION BROKERS' Moral Dilemmas

1. Reporting data
2. Obtaining and sharing information



## 5. Conclusions



*I Some individuals are more ethically sensitive, others less.*

*II Librarians and information professionals claim that they need to know more about data protection. It seems that having this knowledge, they would have less moral dilemmas.*

*III Permanent education*

*IV Examinations seems not to confirm that in the age of the new technologies librarians and information professionals in Poland have more moral dilemmas (really don't they?!)*

*V The author claims that they have, but probably they don't know how to identify them.*

*VI Their ethical awareness is not formed as well as the author could expect.*

## 6. Tasks

*I It is necessary to more often raise the issues of profession morality on a broad public.*

*II It is necessary to examine the ethical awareness and consciousness of information professionals and librarians.*

*III It is necessary to create a list of moral dilemmas which they experience or can experience.*

*IV There should be a permanent education also in the axiological and ethical range.*

